

The Obama Administration made it very clear from day one that their goal of restoring financial responsibility – a goal that I share with the President – includes eliminating wasteful and reckless spending from our budget.

We have made some progress on the issue. Congress established rules that mandate public disclosure of earmarks in a searchable public format. This progress, however, is now being thwarted by failed policies of a Congressional kind – unknown and unacknowledged earmarks, tucked into larger spending measures.

The recent news that the Defense funding bill included \$550 million, \$330 million more than was requested by the Obama Administration, is the newest and most egregious example of bad policy. We cannot allow this earmark process to move forward as is – tucking earmarks away that cannot be found, or attributed to any individuals, though pushed forward as part of a plan to promote and support certain private and for-profit industries, no matter how costly and unnecessary.

On July 7, 2009, I introduced House Resolution 614. H.Res. 614 would amend the Rules of the House of Representatives to prohibit earmarks to for-profit entities. If this rule were adopted, no longer would for-profit contractors have the ability to receive public money for private benefit.

We need comprehensive earmark reform and we need it now. Who knows how many more millions and billions of dollars we are siphoning away from healthcare reform, education, infrastructure and green jobs by throwing our moral compass out the window and blindly writing checks to private, for-profit interests for our own selfish benefit.

Earmark reform now.